

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 194

July 1, 1999, 3:36 p.m.
Page S-8010 Temp. Record

TREASURY APPROPRIATIONS/Anti-Alcohol Ads with Anti-Illegal Drug Funds

SUBJECT: Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2000 . . . S. 1282.
Campbell motion to table the Lautenberg amendment No. 1214.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 58-40

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1282, the Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2000, will provide \$27.734 billion in new budget authority (BA) for the Department of the Treasury, Postal Service, Executive Office of the President, and various independent agencies. This amount is \$177.6 million less than provided in fiscal year (FY) 1999 and is \$259.1 million less than requested.

The Lautenberg amendment would amend the statutory authorization for the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to allow it to fund ads to discourage the use of alcohol by minors in its ongoing national media campaign against illegal drug use, and it would require it to fund such ads against alcohol use by minors.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. After debate, Senator Campbell moved to table the Lautenberg amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

It is extremely difficult for us to vote against this amendment. Many of us have had loved ones who have died from alcohol-related problems; many of us have family members who are struggling with alcoholism; many of us have lost parents, children, or other close family members when they have been killed by drunk drivers. Our colleagues are absolutely correct that underage drinking is a serious part of the problem of alcohol abuse in America and that it is a subject that the Federal Government should address. However, it would be a monumental mistake to try to reduce underage drinking, as this amendment proposes, using funds from the ongoing anti-illegal drug media campaign.

(See other side)

| YEAS (58) | | | NAYS (40) | | | NOT VOTING (1) | |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Republicans (48 or 89%) | | Democrats (10 or 23%) | Republicans (6 or 11%) | | Democrats (34 or 77%) | Republicans (0) | Democrats (1) |
| Abraham | Hagel | Baucus | DeWine | Akaka | Kerry | | Inouye- ² |
| Allard | Hatch | Breaux | Helms | Bayh | Kohl | | |
| Ashcroft | Hutchinson | Conrad | Hutchison | Biden | Landrieu | | |
| Bennett | Inhofe | Daschle | Roth | Bingaman | Lautenberg | | |
| Bond | Jeffords | Dorgan | Specter | Boxer | Leahy | | |
| Brownback | Kyl | Graham | Stevens | Bryan | Levin | | |
| Bunning | Lott | Kerrey | | Byrd | Lieberman | | |
| Burns | Lugar | Lincoln | | Cleland | Mikulski | | |
| Campbell | Mack | Robb | | Dodd | Moynihan | | |
| Chafee | McConnell | Torricelli | | Durbin | Murray | | |
| Cochran | Murkowski | | | Edwards | Reed | | |
| Collins | Nickles | | | Feingold | Reid | | |
| Coverdell | Roberts | | | Feinstein | Rockefeller | | |
| Craig | Santorum | | | Harkin | Sarbanes | | |
| Crapo | Sessions | | | Hollings | Schumer | | |
| Domenici | Shelby | | | Johnson | Wellstone | | |
| Enzi | Smith, Bob | | | Kennedy | Wyden | | |
| Fitzgerald | Smith, Gordon | | | | | | |
| Frist | Snowe | | | | | | |
| Gorton | Thomas | | | | | | |
| Gramm | Thompson | | | | | | |
| Grams | Thurmond | | | | | | |
| Grassley | Voinovich | | | | | | |
| Gregg | Warner | | | | | | |

VOTING PRESENT (1)
McCain

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:
1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:
AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

Before President Clinton was elected in 1992, illegal drug use, especially by young people, was in a downward spiral. Unfortunately, one of the first things President Clinton, and the Democratic Congress that was elected with him, did was cut funding for a variety of anti-illegal drug programs. Illegal drug use by children began to rise. According to a University of Michigan study, it has gone up 46 percent since 1992. Members of both parties are alarmed by that rise and have been fighting to reverse it for the past few years. A major part of that effort is a \$1 billion, 5-year media campaign to discourage illegal drug use. That campaign is being conducted in tandem with the Partnership for a Drug-Free America (PDFA). The PDFA, which is a private organization, is staffed by hundreds of volunteers from the communications industry, and it produces the ads on a pro bono basis. That campaign is well underway and is being carefully monitored every step of the way by the General Accounting Office. Before any ads were aired, extensive psychological and sociological research was done on specific markets to determine the attitudes that kids in those markets of different ages, races, and genders had toward particular drugs--marijuana, cocaine, inhalants, methamphetamine, heroine, and other drugs. Ads were then test-marketed and finally began to air. There is absolutely no guesswork in this program; experts who have decades of experience in crafting media messages to shape people's attitudes toward particular products have put together an extremely professional, well-researched, and well-executed ad campaign.

This media campaign, which is well underway, has not done research to determine what type of anti-alcohol ads would be effective. Our colleagues, though, now want it to start airing such ads. In response, the first problem with that suggestion is that any funding for any ads put together and aired would have to come directly out of the funding for the anti-illegal drug ads. Second, funding for this bill is extremely tight, which has forced a reduction in funding for this program this year, so our colleagues' proposed cut would come out of a budget that has already been cut. Third, no research has been done to determine what type of anti-alcohol ads would be effective, so either the additional expense would have to be incurred from such research or anti-alcohol ads would have to be aired without proper preparation. Marketing to reduce alcohol abuse would require different strategies than marketing to reduce illegal drug use. Alcohol, unlike illicit drugs, is legal. It has widespread cultural acceptance and use (responsible and otherwise), and it is widely glamorized in movies, television, and music. Fourth, the disruption to the anti-drug ad campaign that would come from the lack of funding would destroy the continuity of the program and would make it impossible for the General Accounting Office to evaluate accurately the long-term effectiveness of the program.

As with most good ideas Members have for new funding programs, this good idea of our colleagues is not as new as it seems. The Federal Government already has programs that address the underage consumption of alcohol, including under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration and the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Further, numerous private sector groups conduct media campaigns against such use (including the alcohol industry itself, which spent \$350 million over the last 10 years to discourage illegal drinking by minors). We note that the current ONDCP program helps those efforts, because every media buy it makes requires the outlet from which it made the purchase to provide equal time for public service announcements. In a large percentage of those media buys, air time is being given to such groups as Mothers Against Drunk Driving to run anti-alcohol ads. The concerted efforts that have been made over the past couple of decades against the irresponsible use of alcohol, particularly by minors, have been effective in reducing underage consumption of alcohol. Unlike illegal drug use, which saw a resurgence in the 1990s, alcohol use has continued to decline. The Centers for Disease Control reports that underage drinking has dropped by more than 50 percent over the past 20 years. The battle is huge, but it is being won, unlike the battle against illegal drugs.

The Federal Government has an annual budget of more than \$1.7 trillion. If our colleagues wish to start a new campaign to discourage youth drinking, we will be happy to join them in finding low-priority spending within this \$1.7 trillion budget to cut in order to pay for that new campaign. We will not join them, though, in taking already scarce funds from the current anti-drug campaign. Regretfully, we must oppose this amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

Young people abuse alcohol more than any other drug, and it kills more children ages 12-20 than all illegal drugs combined. In total, there are nearly 4 million underage children who suffer from alcohol dependence. Further, a study at Columbia University found that young people who drink alcohol are 7.5 times more likely to use any illegal drug and 50 times more likely to use cocaine than young people who do not drink. In other words, alcohol is a gateway drug to illegal drugs--if we can stop underage alcohol use, we can thereby stop illegal drug use. The Department of Health and Human Services found that the average age at which children start drinking is 13 and that children who begin drinking at the age of 13 have a 47-percent chance of becoming alcohol dependent. If they wait until they are 21, they have only a 10-percent chance. It is illegal to drink under the age of 21; alcohol is the most abused drug by children under the age of 21; alcohol kills more youth than all other drugs combined; alcohol is a gateway drug to illegal drugs. All of these facts make it logical, and even imperative, that any media campaign to discourage drug use by young people include ads against alcohol consumption. The ONDCP is currently conducting a media campaign against illegal drug use, but it is not including ads against alcohol use. It believes it does not have the authority. This amendment would give it the authority and would require it to start such ads. We urge our colleagues to support this common-sense amendment.